



NEWS RELEASE

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California Emergency Management Agency Announces Funding To Fight Human Trafficking

MATHER – The California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) today announced the award of \$2.7 million dollars through the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Stimulus funds to the six current Human Trafficking Task Forces in California which target the practice of human trafficking and the establishment of two new task forces as part of the Schwarzenegger Administration's efforts to eliminate human trafficking in California. The funding will be used to support the task forces in their efforts to identify victims, provide victims with necessary services and in arresting those involved in trafficking.

"The heinous crime of human trafficking is a scourge on our society", said Cal EMA Secretary Matthew Bettenhausen in announcing the grant awards. "With our extensive international border, major harbors and airports, large immigrant population, powerful economy and our industries, we are a prime target for traffickers. These funds will help deliver needed support, shelter, counseling and legal services to victims and to help law enforcement uncover and prosecute those involved in this modern-day form of slavery."

California currently has six multi-jurisdiction Human Trafficking Task Forces: Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, Orange County (Westminster) and Oakland. These existing task forces and the Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) they partner with will receive the \$2.7m over a three year time period. Each task force will receive a total of \$450,000. Two additional task forces will be determined competitively, based on anti human trafficking needs, in two unrepresented regions of California. These additional task forces will receive slightly more funds to help with start up costs and normal operations. The two new task forces will receive \$175,000 a year for three years for each task force totaling \$1.05 million.

These funds will assist the Human Trafficking Task Forces in identifying and successfully prosecuting traffickers through proactive law enforcement tactics. Task forces will also use these funds to develop better training for law enforcement agencies, victim service providers and the public to identify and assist victims of human trafficking.

"By its very nature human trafficking, in all of its forms, is largely hidden from view. These grant funds will help bring this insidious problem to light and to provide the tools necessary to help victims and catch the criminals. The Governor and First Lady have provided strong leadership in this fight, both in setting new laws and providing public awareness and we look forward to working with all the task forces to bring this practice to an end", said Secretary Bettenhausen.

The Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) is one of the NGOs involved in this effort

"CAST and its coalition partners through the Los Angeles Metropolitan Taskforce are thrilled to learn that Cal EMA will be supporting human trafficking taskforces in California," said CAST Executive Director Kay Buck.

“Cal EMA has been such a great partner in our efforts to support the critical work of law enforcement and NGO’s working collaboratively to hold traffickers accountable and protect victims. This initiative once again puts California on the map as a national leader against slavery and human trafficking.”

For more information about Human Trafficking and all of Cal EMA’s programs, please visit www.calema.ca.gov

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